



# Rhode Island Department of Health

3 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908 | [www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

For: Immediate release  
Date: March 21, 2020  
Contact: Joseph Wendelken (401-378-0704)

For ASL version, click local TV stations:

## ABC6

<https://www.abc6.com/ri-announces-12-new-cases-of-covid-19-total-now-66/>

## NBC10

<https://turnto10.com/news/local/raimondo-no-plans-for-lockdown-in-rhode-island>

## FOX11

<https://www.wpri.com/health/coronavirus/gov-raimondo-dept-of-health-to-hold-covid-19-briefing-at-1-p-m/>

## CBS12

<https://www.wpri.com/health/coronavirus/gov-raimondo-dept-of-health-to-hold-covid-19-briefing-at-1-p-m/>

## Governor Gina Raimondo's Facebook Video

<https://www.facebook.com/223653951015444/videos/220623449288744/>

Deaf Interpreter: Charley Thorn; ASL Interpreter: Rayne Depukat

### **Governor, Dr. Alexander-Scott Provide Updates on State Regulations During COVID-19 Crisis**

*Twelve additional cases of COVID-19 in Rhode Island*

Governor Gina M. Raimondo and Director of Health Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH today made several announcements about the state's response to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

- **Health insurance:** HealthSource RI has opened a special enrollment period to allow Rhode Islanders to purchase coverage through April 15. In addition, HealthSource RI always offers a special enrollment period of 60 days for anyone who loses a job or changes jobs for any reason. Rhode Islanders with questions or those looking to enroll should visit [here](#).
- **Takeaway wine and beer:** Last night, the Governor signed an [Executive Order](#) allowing restaurants and bars in Rhode Island to include wine and beer with their to-go orders.
- **Gun permits:** Responding to feedback from the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association regarding the current strain on their resources, the Governor yesterday signed an [Executive Order](#) extending from seven to thirty days the time period in which police departments can conduct background checks for firearm purchases.

Governor Raimondo also reiterated that gatherings are restricted to 10 people or fewer. All gatherings that are non-essential, even if they are below the 10-person limit, should be cancelled or postponed.

Dr. Alexander-Scott announced today that Rhode Island has 12 additional cases of COVID-19. These people range in age from their 20s to their 70s. Of these 12 people, three are hospitalized. RIDOH is investigating each case. This brings Rhode Island's case count to 66.

#### Data updates

- Number of Rhode Island COVID-19 positive (including presumptive positive) cases: 66
  - Bristol County: 5
  - Kent County: 7
  - Newport County: 8
  - Providence County: 37
  - Washington County: 9
- Number of people who had negative test results: 862
- Number of people for whom tests are pending: 290
- Number of people who are currently instructed to self-quarantine in Rhode Island: approximately 2,500

#### Key messages for the public

- If you have traveled anywhere internationally in the last 14 days, self-quarantine for 14 days. That means do not go to work or school and stay at home.
- Avoid all crowded places, large events, and mass gatherings. This is social distancing. However, people should continue doing essential errands (such as going to the grocery store).
- Through March 30th, there will be no on-site food consumption for restaurants, bars, coffee shops, or other food establishments in Rhode Island. (Establishments with a food license can continue to conduct pick-up, drive-thru and delivery only.)
- Due to the closure of schools, free "Grab and Go" meals are available (March 16th - March 20th) for children throughout Rhode Island. More information is [available online](#).
- Whenever possible, avoid close personal contact with people in public. When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs. [Additional guidance](#) is available from CDC.
- People without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.
- People who think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider. These people should not go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless they are experiencing a medical emergency). Healthcare providers have a dedicated number that they are then using to consult with RIDOH on potential COVID-19 cases.
- Early data suggest that older adults are twice as likely to experience serious COVID-19 illness. RIDOH is reiterating CDC's guidance for people older than 60 years of age:
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs.
  - Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.
  - Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your doctor.
  - More information is [available from CDC](#).
- People with general, non-medical questions about COVID-19 can visit [www.health.ri.gov/covid](http://www.health.ri.gov/covid), write to [RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov), or call 401-222-8022. This is the COVID-19

Hotline that RIDOH has available to the public. The Hotline will be staffed this weekend from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm both Saturday and Sunday. (After hours people are being directed to call 211.)

- Everyone can help stop the spread of viruses in Rhode Island.
  - Get your flu shot, and make sure the people around you do the same.
  - Wash your hands often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.
  - Stay home from work or school if you are sick.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.

###